



Did You Know?



ANCC Fairfax - Golf Architect George W. Cobb

On August 4, 1958 ANCC procured 233 acres in Fairfax that included an 18 hole golf course for \$1,062,313.89. On August 27, 1958 the Board of Governors authorized the Executive Committee to negotiate for the purchase of additional real estate at Fairfax. Shortly thereafter, the Executive Committee engaged renowned golf course architect George W. Cobb, whose designs included Quail Hollow (the site of this year's PGA Championship), the par 3 course at Augusta National (with Bobby Jones) and the University of Maryland golf course, to investigate the feasibility of "increasing the golf facilities at the Fairfax course..." Cobb presented his report in October to joint meeting of the Golf & Green Committees (they were separate committees at that time).

Golf Course Architect George W. Cobb's Fairfax Report

Although we do not currently have a copy of George W. Cobb's report, we know the following elements from the Golf and Green Committee minutes.

"The joint meeting approved the substance of Mr. Cobb's report as follows:

- a. No additional 9 or 18 holes of golf could be built on the Fairfax property or available property adjacent thereto, which would be economically feasible or suitable for play.
- b. Certain rearrangements be made to the Fairfax course to improve its attractiveness and reduce maintenance costs and create more nearly a championship course.
- c. Certain rearrangements be made to the Arlington course to eliminate some climbs, enlarge some greens while making them visible and to utilize new properties now contained in the Arlington course.
- d. Utilize as residential property, any additional available land owned at Fairfax after making appropriate changes in the course layout."

Today we know that, in fact, it was possible to build another nine holes at Fairfax. What we do not know is the constraints under which Cobb worked. Given the financial status of the Club at the time, it is quite possible that Cobb was directed to integrate the additional holes with its first tee and last green near the clubhouse **without modifying the existing 18-hole course**. This we know would not have been feasible.

Did You Know?



Cobb did make suggestions for changes to the course. We recently came into possession of Cobb's drawings of greens for the following original Robert Trent Jones holes:

- #1 No longer exists (NLE)
- #2 NLE
- #3 NLE
- #5 Current Red #7 but green site changed in 1994 expansion to 27 holes
- #9 Current White #9
- #14 NLE

Cobb's report had additional consequences because it convinced Club leadership that the unused ("fringe") acreage at Fairfax should be sold to reduce the financial strain on the Club brought about by the Fairfax CC and Chantilly (470 acres) acquisitions. As the result:

- 1) In May 1959 the Club declined an offer to purchase two lots adjacent to the #12 green (now White #2). While an understandable decision given Cobb's report, possession of those two lots would have offered the Club far more flexibility in addressing the perpetual problems with this green.
- 2) A special membership meeting was held on December 14, 1959 to vote on the disposal of 80 acres at Fairfax. The vote was 67 "For" and 51 "Against", short of the 2/3 required for passage. Had this motion passed, ANCC would not have been able to construct the nine additional holes at Fairfax.

December 2017